

## The Bannock Indian War

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The Indians began to leave the reservation fleeing the worsening conditions. By June of 1878 tensions came to a head. The deprivations suffered from lack of rations and supplies during the winter and the lack of support from their government agent set the stage for revolt. Then, too, the news came in that an Indian village in the hills had been destroyed by soldiers. Forty-six Bannocks looking for allies against the Whites visited the Malheur Reservation and brought news of the Bannock uprising at Fort Hall. Some Paiutes became increasingly convinced that war was the only effective way to bring attention to their plight. They understood the hopelessness of such a war, but they preferred to fight rather than to starve to death.

The Bannock Indian War, as it was later called, consisted of few actual battles, but a resurgence of raiding by the Indians and killing of Indians by the Whites. By mid-July the army got the help of Umatilla Indian scouts to the north in a scheme to kill Chief Egan. The Paiutes believed the Umatillas to be friendly and were hoping to find allies at the meeting. Instead, they walked into an ambush. The scheme succeeded, and Chief Egan was killed. With the last of their leaders dead, the Bannocks and Paiutes surrendered. The northern Paiutes, who had numbered close to 2,000 ten years before, had lost two-thirds of their people.